

#### § 4.8

#### 11 CFR Ch. I (1–197 Edition)

in person or by mail. The Public Records Office is open Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and is located on the first floor, 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20463.

(b) Requests for copies of records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act shall be addressed to FOIA officer, Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20463. The request shall reasonably describe the records sought with sufficient specificity with respect to names, dates, and subject matter, to permit the records to be located. A requester will be promptly advised if the records cannot be located on the basis of the description given and that further identifying information must be provided before the request can be satisfied.

(c) Records or copies thereof will normally be made available either immediately upon receipt of a request or within ten working days thereafter, or twenty working days in the case of an appeal, unless in unusual circumstances the time is extended or subject to 11 CFR 4.9(f)(3), which governs advance payments. In the event the time is extended, the requestor shall be notified of the reasons for the extension and the date on which a determination is expected to be made, but in no case shall the extended time exceed ten working days. An extension may be made if it is—

(1) Necessary to locate records or transfer them from physically separate facilities; or

(2) Necessary to search for, collect, and appropriately examine a large quantity of separate and distinct records which are the subject of a single request; or

(3) Necessary for consultation with another agency which has a substantial interest in the determination of the request, or with two or more components of the Commission which have a substantial subject matter interest therein.

(d) Any person denied access to records by the Commission shall be notified immediately giving reasons therefore, and notified of the right of such person to appeal such adverse determination to the Commission.

(e) The date of receipt of a request under this part shall be the date on which the FOIA Officer actually receives the request.

[44 FR 33368, June 8, 1979, as amended at 45 FR 31292, May 13, 1980; 50 FR 50778, Dec. 12, 1985; 52 FR 39213, Oct. 21, 1987]

#### § 4.8 Appeal of denial.

(a) Any person who has been notified pursuant to § 4.6(d) of this part that his/her request for inspection of a record or for a copy has been denied, or who has received no response within ten working days (or within such extended period as is permitted under § 4.7(c) of this part) after the request has been received by the Commission, may appeal the adverse determination or the failure to respond by requesting the Commission to direct that the record be made available.

(b) The appeal request shall be in writing, shall clearly and prominently state on the envelope or other cover and at the top of the first page “FOIA Appeal”, and shall identify the record in the form in which it was originally requested.

(c) The appeal request should be delivered or addressed to the FOIA Officer, Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20463.

(d) The requestor may state facts and cite legal or other authorities as he/she deems appropriate in support of the appeal request.

(e) For good cause shown, the Commission may disclose a record which is subject to one of the exemptions listed in § 4.5 of this part.

(f) The Commission will make a determination with respect to any appeal within twenty days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) after receipt of the appeal (or within such extended period as is permitted under § 4.7(c) of this part). If on appeal, the denial of the request for a record or a copy is in whole or in part upheld, the Commission shall advise the requestor of the denial and shall notify him/her of the provisions for judicial review of that determination as set forth in 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4).

(g) Because of the risk of misunderstanding inherent in oral communications, the Commission will not entertain any appeal from an alleged denial

or failure to comply with an oral request. Any person who has orally requested a copy of a record that he/she believes to have been improperly denied should resubmit the request in writing as set forth in § 4.7.

[44 FR 33368, June 8, 1979, as amended at 50 FR 50778, Dec. 12, 1985]

#### § 4.9 Fees.

(a) *Exceptions to fee charges*—(1) *General*. Except for a commercial use requester, the Commission will not charge a fee to any requester for the first two hours of search time and the first 100 pages of duplication in response to any FOIA request.

(2) *Free computer search time*. For purposes of this paragraph, the term *search time* is based on the concept of a manual search. To apply this to a search conducted by a computer, the Commission will provide the equivalent dollar value of two hours of professional staff time, calculated according to paragraph (c)(4) of this section, in computer search time. Computer search time is determined by adding the cost of the computer connect time actually used for the search, calculated at the rate of \$25.00 per hour, to the cost of the operator's salary for the time spent conducting the computer search, calculated at the professional staff time rate set forth at paragraph (c)(4) of this section.

(3) *Definition of pages*. For purposes of this paragraph, the word *pages* refers to paper copies of a standard agency size which will normally be 8½" x 11" or 8½" x 14". Thus, while a requester would not be entitled to 100 free computer disks, for example, a requester would be entitled to 100 free pages of a computer printout.

(4) *Minimum charge*. The Commission will not charge a fee to any requester when the allowable direct cost of that FOIA request is equal to or less than the Commission's cost of routinely collecting and processing a FOIA request fee.

(b) *Fee reduction or waiver*—(1) The Commission will consider requests for the reduction or waiver of any fees assessed pursuant to paragraph (c)(1) of this section if it determines, either as a result of its own motion or in response to a written submission by the

requester, that disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and that disclosure of the information is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(2) A request for a reduction or waiver of fees shall be made in writing by the FOIA requester; shall accompany the relevant FOIA request so as to be considered timely; and shall include a specific explanation as to why the fee for that FOIA request should be reduced or waived, applying the standard stated in paragraph (b)(1) of this section to the facts of that particular request. In addition, the explanation shall include: the requester's (and user's, if the requester and the user are different persons or entities) identity, qualifications and expertise in the subject area, and ability and intention to disseminate the information to the public; and a discussion of any commercial or personal benefit that the requester (and user, if the requester and user are different persons or entities) expects as a result of disclosure, including whether the information disclosed would be resold in any form at a fee above actual cost.

(c) *Fees to be charged*. (1) The FOIA services provided by the Commission in response to a FOIA request for which the requester will be charged will depend upon the category of the requester. The categories of FOIA requestors are as follows:

(i) *Commercial use requestors*. A requester of documents for commercial use will be assessed reasonable standard charges for the full allowable direct costs of searching for, reviewing for release and duplicating the records sought, according to the Commission's schedule of fees for those services as set forth at paragraph (c)(4) of this section. A commercial use requestor is not entitled to two hours of free search time nor 100 free pages of duplication of documents.

(ii) *Educational and non-commercial scientific institution requestors*. The Commission will provide documents to requestors in this category for the cost of duplication of the records provided by